

Appendix A: Final 2019-2020 Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report Public Comments and Agency Responses

The draft of the 2019-2020 Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (“Draft CAPER”) was made available on July 19, 2020, for a 15-day public comment period ending August 4, 2020. The State of Montana held a public hearing on the Draft CAPER on July 28, 2020. All comments received in writing and at the hearing were considered, and the State of Montana’s responses to each comment are provided below. The recording of and minutes for the meeting are available on Commerce’s website at <http://commerce.mt.gov/conplan>.

Comments Received and Responses Thereto

**North Central Independent Living Services, Inc.
Shyla Patera, IL Specialist**

Comment #1:

I appreciate this opportunity to speak at the CAPER regarding the CAPER. First of all, I would like to congratulate Montana Housing on working so diligently on meeting their CAPER goals in year five. One of the things I’m hoping that you’ll do as you move forward, specifically with the HUD Mega Amendments, is tracking how we are expending that money regarding housing, healthcare, and food security and, as always, NCILS being a center for independent living, we applaud the work that you’ve done on the Built Environment as the State of Montana but we hope that you’ll include visitable and universal design and encourage builders to work on those projects to make sure that all of us can live in our communities. We are also hopeful that a lot of the HUD projects that need remodeling can see some funding in the future so that we can keep people with disabilities and seniors in their homes and I will be submitting the written comments.

Response to Comment #1:

The Montana Departments of Commerce and Health and Human Services use the CAPER to detail how HUD funds for Community Planning and Development (CPD) programs (namely CDBG, ESG, HOME, and HTF) have been expended during specific program years. In the future, the Departments will incorporate into the CAPER reporting framework, expenditures resulting from CARES Act funding and HUD Mega Waiver activities. The Departments are actively participating in state-level and regional conversations about the confluence of housing and healthcare. Additionally, Commerce, through its housing development programs (CDBG, HOME, and HTF) gives preference to applications that benefit extremely low-income, homeless, disabled, elderly, and other disadvantaged individuals and families. Commerce strongly encourages applicants, to the maximum extent possible, to include the three basic visitability features that increase access to friends and family for individuals with disabilities (a zero-step entrance, doors with 32 inches of clear passage space, and a wheelchair-accessible half bathroom on the main floor). Whether a project serves disabled persons and meets visitability and universal design requirements is considered during application ranking, which is Commerce’s process for prioritizing and funding projects.